GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4946
ANSWERED ON:25.08.2000
DECLINE IN EXPORT OF ORGANIC FOODS
RASHID ALVI

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether exports of organic foods has not picked up under APEDA on account of its misguided policies and lack of indepth knowledge and background;

(b) if not, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government have seen a recent book published by Vigyan Prasar in which measures to deal with this problem across the world have been mentioned;

(d) if so, the details of alternative measures mentioned in the book;

(e) whether the Government are considering to set up a Task Force to implement various pragmatic findings in the above book; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY(SHRI MURASOLI MARAN)

a) No, Sir.
b) The role of APEDA is to promote the export of agricultural and processed food items which includes organically produced items also. Organic production and its commercial marketing is a comparatively new area of commercial interest and export potential. From available information, exports of organic food items handled by APEDA haveincreased from an estimated Rs.26.06 lakhs in 1998-99 to an estimated level of Rs.2.82 crores during 1999-2000.
c) The book published by Vigyan Prasar titled `Alternatives to Pesticides in Tropical Countries` does not specifically deal with the problem of export of organic food not picking up under APEDA.
d) The book pertains to alternative methods of farming including natural, organic, permaculture and biodynamic, followed in different parts of the world. It also refers to the development of Integrated Pest Management as an alternative to control pesticide problems.
e) & f) There is no specific proposal for setting up a Task Force.